The Labor Meritocracy *Murray Kempton*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

February 6, 1965, 35 cents

The Johnson Message

The purpose of Presidential messages is to set the approach, rather than the details, of the year's legislative agenda. They are in a sense decoys to attract trusting ducks and as few hunters as possible. The first of Lyndon Johnson's messages, on health care, reached Congress on January 7, only three days after the opening. Six more quickly followed: education, immigration, foreign aid, defense, District of Columbia, and last week the budget. This first major batch shows what the style of the Administration will be. The texts are written in plain American and are measured in the loping cadences of a civics teacher summarizing the term's instruction. "He manages to say the most revolutionary things in such a bland way that they are perfectly acceptable to everyone," says a Republican friend of the Great Society. "But he really addresses these messages to Congress. He never goes over its head to the people." The result is universal acquiescence. The elements of the Johnson style might profitably be collected in a thin volume and distributed to future Presidents at the start of each new Administration, along with copies of the Federalist Papers and other necessary documents. Although Mr. Johnson may not write them himself, the messages all are cut to the Johnson fashion. They often begin, or end, with an appeal to the national past. The Health Message starts off with an unidentified fragment from Thomas Jefferson, who is almost as quotable as the Bible, and to as many contradictory points. The Education Message, which Christopher Jencks in this issue calls "the most far-reaching and radical ever to come from the White House," begins with a phrase from the Northwest Ordinance, (Continued on page 5)

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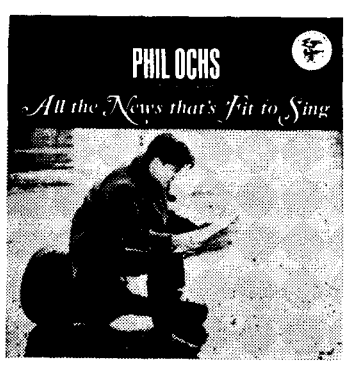

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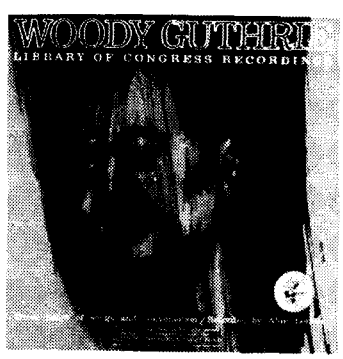

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T.R.B. *from Washington*

The Fifth Year

★ We went out and lit a little candle this week. The fifth birthday of the longest economic expansion in American peacetime history falls in February. Four years without a recession! Why, General Eisenhower gave us three recessions in eight years without half trying.

How did he do it? Because he believed with passionate conviction that government deficit inevitably led to inflation. All the editorial writers praised him. As recently as May, 1963, in an article in *The Saturday Evening Post,* he said, "We are stealing from our grandchildren in order to satisfy our desires today."

And now, look! There has been a fantastic reversal. Right before our eyes we have seen the precepts of the academic economists finally put into practice: something they have vainly taught, almost unheeded, for 30 years. Other countries applied Keynesian economics. Not the United States.

Kennedy began to do it: he launched a $14 billion tax cut in spite of a deficit. It has been a brilliant success. No inflation. With gathering confidence Mr. Johnson proposes a further tax cut this year. We have had five deficits in a row and are budgeting for a sixth, and now suddenly nobody seems to mind very much. How explain it?

Basically it is because they are not *real* deficits. AT&T and General Motors borrow, and increase their debt, every year, but nobody calls this "deficits." The companies are praised for vision and foresight.

The federal business is bigger than any of them. The federal government has the power to create money. This may be inflationary or it may not. Obviously it hasn't been for the last four years. When there is slack in the economy, where there are idle plants and idle workers, the deficit is a handy tool for pushing money out into the spending stream. That is what we have been doing. It *would* be inflationary – and quite dangerous – in a full-employment economy, but that isn't what we have.

Mr. Johnson isn't apologizing for stimulating the economy any more; he is boldly proclaiming it. "We have recognized as self-defeating," he said in his economic message, "the effort to balance our budget too quickly, in an economy operating well below its potential."

Fine, so far as it goes! But in our view the Johnson budget doesn't go half far enough. Our birthday candle this year may be the last.

Mr. Kennedy in his economic message of January, 1962, said: "A four percent unemployment rate . . . can be achieved in 1963, if appropriate fiscal, monetary and other policies are used." Well, 1963 has come and gone and the tragic unemployment still averages 5.2 percent. For teenagers and Negroes it is vastly higher. That is where crime comes from; this is where evil breeds on city streets.

We see no sign that the new Johnson budget will do much about it. He offers, it is true, an expansionary budget but the labor force is expanding, too – by over a million in 1965.

We read the message as a political decision to leave unemployment in the Great Society about where it is.

The GOP Mess

★ We went out to Chicago last week to watch the Republican National Committee. We feel that the faster the GOP revives, the better for a two-party nation. We came away pretty discouraged, though. The Republicans are in a much worse mess than we thought.

On the surface it was genteel harmony. They maneuvered an orderly transition from national chairman Burch to Bliss. There was no bloodletting. But there was also, it seemed to us, an almost complete lack of understanding of what had hit them. The 132 members fell into a type. There was an air of affluence and distinction and command. The women, in particular, were patrician, with blue-rinse hair and expensive frocks. It was an all-white crowd under glittering hotel chandeliers and Hudson Night Boat elegance. Most were 60 or so, save for the new Southern group of smooth young racists bequeathed by Barry Goldwater.

Outsiders like Senator Thruston Morton, Ky., kept telling them they would have to win back the Negroes. They looked around uncomfortably. Chairman-elect Ray Bliss proved dull and tongue-tied. Surely the party must find a livelier spokesman! Governor Smylie, Idaho, was there, trying to promote a national convention, or at any rate a broadly-based advisory council to give the party a national voice. (The 17 Republican governors, incidentally, are about the most dynamic thing in the party.) But no; foxy old Senator Dirksen (who wasn't present) had got there first with his precious proposal for a 22-man "cooperating committee" of which 11 members will be conservative congressmen. The governors would be allowed representation but would be heavily outnumbered.

Barry Goldwater made a speech in which he was at his best, and worst. White-haired, dark glasses, pink cheeks, jutting jaw, handsome, dashing, he took responsibility for the election disaster in rather a gallant way. We felt for him. And then he went on to give a completely conspiratorial interpretation of his defeat; it wasn't the Democrats who beat him, you see, but the "full muscle and power of the federal government." The federal government was after them all, "and you are going to feel it more, and more, and more!" We came away feeling discouraged.

We tuned in on H. L. Hunt's *Life Line* last week and heard a voice of doom scaring the daylight out of his estimated six million listeners. "Soviet Russia now has 150 thermonuclear-powered bombers [sic] capable of speeds in excess of 3,500 miles an hour," it said. "Target date" for attack is "the last days of 1965." . . . That's where the Goldwater strength came from, and it's all tax exempt.

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The Johnson Message

passed by the Continental Congress in 1787 (the same year as the Jefferson reference), and includes a declaration by Mirabeau B. Lamar, "the second President of the Republic of Texas and the father of Texas education." The Defense Message both begins *and* ends with sentences from George Washington's first annual address to Congress. This appeal to Historical Precedents is followed by an appeal to Unexpected Allies. The Education Message, for example, enshrines a line of perhaps unintentional support by the late Senator Robert Taft, proposing the notion that the federal government has obligations in the areas of both education and health. The Defense Message is dutifully charitable to the achievements of "four Administrations and eight Congresses."

After historical and bipartisan legitimacy have been established, the messages catalog the myriad goods and services which the Great Society can provide, all packaged in thrift. Even if he did not make a point of prudence at every juncture, the President could not conceivably be charged with extravagance. But the messages never miss an opportunity to claim frugality. The startling aspect of some of the proposals is the lack, not the extent, of new spending. Four years ago, the frustrations of the fifties burst into the urgency of the early sixties, and a new President was calling for huge new expenditures for military development. This year, the Defense Message acknowledges a significant and welcome, if modest, reduction in spending and in effect kisses off some old controversial programs – an anti-missile system and a new manned bomber, for two. At the same time, the President recognizes the necessity of answering charges of penny-pinching. The Defense Message contains three declarations of the Administration's determination to hold up its share of spending, in case the budget cutters should think of paring it still further.

None of the messages delivered so far – with the exception of the one on education – departs from the specific objectives of the last four years. The programs of January and February, 1961, called for greater equity between the poor and rich, black and white, ignorant and educated, jobless and employed; the need for more just social relationships has not diminished, but the need seems no longer so novel or so immediately suspect. Medicare has ceased being a jarring political neologism, and the political dictionary accepts the concepts, if not the exact definitions, of federal aid to education, multilateral foreign aid, non-discriminatory immigration, declining defense expenditures, and a better deal for the District of Columbia. The various messages which deal with these topics are in some measure

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pasted together from the proposals of the New Frontier. Parts of Mr. Johnson's Health Message, for instance, are pretty close paraphrases of President Kennedy's message of February, 1961. It repeats the plan for medical care for the aged within the Social Security system, and recommends a national network of regional health centers which would concentrate research and treatment of major diseases. There is more for children's health services, mental health centers, and rehabilitation, and also there is new emphasis on reducing environmental pollution.

The Defense Message carries on Secretary McNamara's well-known plans for establishing a dollar "plateau" of expenditures. While total spending remains stable, however, the real value of the defense outlay will amount to less and less each year as a percentage of total federal spending. The message reflects the Secretary's belief that most of the hardware "gaps" are filled, that research deserves more attention than development, which in turn takes precedence over production, and that further hard looks at inefficiency in the military establishment might save a good deal more money. Foreign aid is played in as low a key as defense. The expenditure of $3.38 billion for foreign aid is the lowest in the history of the program, and as a share of the total budget, not to mention the national economy, it is modest. It bows low to the principle of multi-national rather than unilateral aid programs, but the respect is not noticeably reinforced in the expenditure column. Economic assistance is still tied to the much larger, and much more popular (in Congress) military aid program, despite the criticisms of Senator Fulbright, who has dissociated himself from management of the foreign aid bill this year. The Immigration Message recommends revision of the more unconscionable provisions of the McCarran-Walters Act, which is the most egregiously racist federal statute on the books. The President would like to see immigation quotas filled by those with needed skills rather than the proper Anglo-Saxon pedigrees.

The trick, of course, is to combine popular acceptance of this Great Society program with congressional approval. To turn it, Mr. Johnson has summoned his expert knowledge of congressional psychology. He knows that congressmen do not as a rule fear government spending, federal involvement in education, or a national health program, so much as not being esteemed. The messages on health, education, defense, foreign aid and the rest which President Kennedy sent out in early 1961 seemed to increase congressional anxiety. For they were meant to educate the country and were written with a tough, almost impertinent intellectualism which offended many a sensitive congressional ear. President Johnson has made no such mistake. He can appeal to Congress not because he thinks well of it, which of course he does, but because he thinks like it. He has the knack of stating worthy goals in the most undemanding prose, which is the style of the congressional newsletter, every politician's favorite literary model. He has the talent of identifying every current political myth, finding the right way to state it, and rendering it ineffective to hinder his proposals. ("This may be the longest honeymoon on record," a congressional aide marveled last week.) In the Defense Message, Mr. Johnson cannily renames the Polaris B-3 the "Poseidon," and thus avoids the charge that the Administration is not developing new missile systems. The Education Message provides a devious formula of grants to students instead of schools, and so diverts most of the antagonisms of Catholics and secularists from the aid-to-parochial schools issue, even if the program fills neither side with great joy. Although the Budget adds up to $99.7 billion, that figure represents the "administrative budget," and is less meaningful than the "cash budget," which is $30 billion higher. The administrative budget is easily fudged; it does not have to include spending from federal trust funds (but neither does it contain income from the funds, which usually helps to pare projected deficits). The cash budget is expanding in natural and healthy proportion to the country's growth, as the President tried to explain to the skeptical businessmen who gathered at his Texas ranch last December.

Games theorists like to consider certain rules of play in which there are ways out for all contestants; those temporarily ahead are willing to help those behind, and no one cares about the final score. Unlike baseball, or gin rummy, a no-sum game has no real losers. In a way, President Johnson's messages to Congress lay the rules for a political no-sum game. No side need lose; no one has to take his bat and ball, or his deck of cards, and go home sore. The gamesmen have discovered that a system without losers can still produce winners. Mr. Johnson means to show that the political game can do the same.

Congressional Foreign Policy

Good constitutional theory claims that Congress can play a constructive role in the formulation of foreign policy. Experience shows that it almost never does. Last week, an odd coalition of House Republicans, Democratic isolationists and Representatives with large Jewish constituencies voted a partial prohibition of surplus food shipments to Egypt. House Democratic leaders argued in vain that the issue was not President Nasser's recent discourtesies to the US, but the freedom the Executive must have in conducting

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foreign affairs. At the very least, they said, Congress should address itself to such matters after hearings by responsible committees, consultation with foreign policy experts, and debates on the current diplomatic context. The House action observed none of these precautions. The prohibition passed in the form of a floor amendment to a supplemental appropriation for the Commodity Credit Corporation. A more unsatisfactory way of directing American diplomacy is really difficult to imagine.

The trouble with congressional fiddling with foreign affairs is not merely the lack of knowledge that most congressmen bring to the subject. Except for a few Senators and fewer Representatives who habitually follow external affairs closely, congressmen are more naturally concerned with the problems and politics of the home-town or state. It is only when a detail of diplomacy, quite divorced from the sweep of policy, appears to contain some political advantage to exploit, that Congress bursts into action. The frustrations of America abroad in the last few months – Sukarno, the Philippines, the Congo, the library burnings – are all politically exploitable, and they were given expression in the nose-thumbing at Egypt.

The great tide of congressional assumption of power, however meddlesome, in foreign affairs rose after World War II in reaction to the Executive agreements which structured the cold war status quo. The catcalls over Yalta became so shrill, and partisan interest in international politics ran so high, that Presidents took to asking Congress for resolutions of support in order to forestall opposition. Executive action in Formosa, Suez, Cuba and Vietnam was reinforced by theoretically useless but politically helpful declarations from Congress. But the price the Presidency paid for asking Congress to counter-sign its blank checks was more rather than less interference. The Bricker Amendment to limit treaty-making power bounced around for years before it could finally be disposed of; the Connally Amendment – effectively removing the US from World Court jurisdiction – and the Battle Act – restricting the government's efforts to promote trade with Communist countries – are enshrined in law.

In the last days of the 88th Congress, Democratic and Republican leaders watched helplessly as a band of jingoistic congressmen sneaked through an amendment to the Food for Peace bill which in effect prohibited shipments to Poland and Yugoslavia. Senator Fulbright called the provision "subversive of US policy"; Senator Aiken said passage "could be a setback for democracy." Not the least shocking aspect of the affair was that the Senate group which finally dealt with the amendment was the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, which is expected to have, and has, not the slightest knowledge of foreign affairs.

Whatever its original objectives, the Food for Peace program is no longer simply a good way to reduce stockpiles of wheat and corn, but an instrument of foreign policy. Senator Fulbright has said that "either Public Law 480 [Food for Peace] deals primarily with US agriculture, in which case it ought not to deal with US foreign policy; or it does deal primarily with US foreign policy, in which case it comes under the jurisdiction of the Foreign Relations Committee." Under the present rules, that remains the choice. Congress might well consider a new arrangement, however, under which bills which have foreign policy implications come at some time before a foreign policy committee competent to consider them. Such a procedure might not satisfy the meddling itch, but it could dull its most abrasive expression.

Competing with AT&T

Los Alamos, New Mexico, is virtually run by the Atomic Energy Commission, and over the past two years the AEC has sought to transfer the small 4,600 telephone system there to private enterprise. Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company, subsidiary of American Telephone and Telegraph, has been running this facility under contract, and it wants the business permanently.

However, an independent telephone company, Universal Telephone, Inc., came in with what looked to be a better offer. Universal, which has headquarters in Milwaukee, and operates 12 local systems in the Midwest, offered $750,000 for the Los Alamos system, plus a yearly franchise fee to the county of four percent of earnings, as against a Mountain States proposal of a two percent franchise fee.

Although on the face of it the Universal bid seems attractive, the AEC went right ahead with preparations to sell to Mountain States, which its counsel rationalized was the only company with legal authority to operate the telephone system under New Mexico state law. It claimed Universal would be duplicating already existing telephone services. While it was quite firm in its opinion, the AEC was careful not to ask the antitrust division of the Justice Department for its advice. But the Justice Department came in with an opinion anyway, saying, in effect, the AEC position was nonsense, and it had better watch out to see that the spirit of free competition is preserved. The Small Business Administration said there was no duplication of telephones, and that the AEC was helping to shut off independent telephone companies vying with their gigantic rival, AT&T.

Senator William Proxmire, who came to the rescue of Universal Telephone in short order, puts it more

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strongly: "The holding of the AEC that the Mountain States Telephone Company is the only company legally authorized to receive and operate these facilities not only contradicts the Department of Justice, the government's legal expert, but guarantees monopoly. This is not only an affront to independent business. It burdens the US taxpayer because the Universal Telephone Company of Milwaukee offered the government far and away the best bargain for these facilities.

"Here is a perfect case study in the massive difficulty of a small business competing with the greatest monopolization power in America – AT&T."

None of this has deterred the AEC from sticking with its opinion; it is preparing to go through the motions of receiving bids, although it seems predetermined that Mountain States is the only company that will get the business.

Tell It to the Navy

A few days before the last election, military and civilian personnel of a Navy Department division in Washington came across an intriguing proposition that was sent to them in the morning mail by their admiral. It suggested that the Communists had patched up their doctrinal quarrels well enough to unite in tricking Americans into viciously attacking Barry Goldwater. The Reds had sunk to low levels before; but here they actually had got the common people in America around to thinking there was a fascist threat from some bogus ultra right wing conspiracy. And while pushing ahead with this dirty work on the one hand, the Reds were, on the other, urging support of the programs of the Johnson Administration, and infiltrating the civil rights movement.

The theory had in fact been set forth in a full page advertisement run in the Washington newspapers, and its originator was Dr. Fred Schwarz, who leads the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade and often catches out the Pink rascals, before they can do any harm. And it had been sent around to the Navy people by the admiral, who is one of Schwarz' admirers.

Indeed, this admiral has taken advantage of various incisive press comments to bring home to his command dire tidings of world history. These have ranged from rather wet attacks on the UN for letting illiterate Africans have the vote in the great concert of nations, to a recent news clip on the poverty war, which said that the public needed to keep a sharp eye out lest the untidy alliance of study groups, political hacks and publicists that run the poverty program squander a hundred billion dollars in the next decade by doling it out to the likes of Adam Clayton Powell and his "B'hoys."

The New GOP Chairman

"Reorganize, Hell– I'm Going to Organize It"

In the course of the Republican National Committee's post-election wake in Chicago late last month, a die-hard admirer of Dean Burch was lamenting the decision to turn party leadership over to "this nuts and bolts character, Bliss." The man being belittled, incoming National Chairman Ray C. Bliss, wasn't around at the time to overhear the remark; if he had been, he might have agreed that the description was apt. This product of the hard school of Ohio politics is a rigid disciplinarian, a hound for detail and the scourge of slothful county chairmen and precinct captains. His long string of successes in his state is due in great part to his continuing and baleful scrutiny of the nuts and bolts that hold his powerful machine together.

Few Republicans in Ohio ever will forget his first move after becoming state chairman in 1949, when the party was dazed by Truman's unexpected trouncing of Dewey. (The latter, by the way, had carried the state against Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944.) Bliss managed to get his hands on the membership rosters of such upper middle-class and GOP-oriented groups as the Rotarians, chambers of commerce, academies of medicine and the country clubs. Next he assigned his staff to the laborious task of checking those membership rosters against the county registration lists.

At that point Bliss undertook one of his rare speaking tours. From city to city he went, scolding fat-cat Republicans. Appearing before a county medical association, for instance, he would first sympathize with their concern about socialized medicine, then reach in his pocket and produce documentary evidence that less than two-thirds of them were registered voters and that less than half of their wives ever had bothered to vote.

This tour had a marked inflationary effect on GOP registration, a fact which a good many Ohioans credit with having saved the late Robert A. Taft from political annihilation in 1950. Numerically speaking, Republicans are the minority in Ohio but Bliss consistently has won elections by mustering his maximum vote, something the state's lethargic Democratic organization has done only twice in the past 16 years. Bliss learned early that while many volunteers talk a good game of politics, few work hard at it. His registration and get out the vote drives have been distinguished by an exceptional talent for cracking the whip.

In 1958 business interests ignored Bliss's anguished

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protests and used the initiative process to place a proposed right-to-work law on the ballot. As Bliss had predicted, the consequent swarm of labor votes not only buried the labor bill but turned control of the state house over to the Democrats and ended the political career of John W. Bricker.

Bliss's only other reverse – if one is willing to exclude the bizarre case of Frank J. Lausche who gets as many Republican votes as he does Democratic – came last year when Barry Goldwater's campaign line frightened hosts of Republicans as well as Democrats.

No self-respecting politician can argue that Bliss's credentials as a state chairman are anything but impeccable. The question now is whether he can impose his system and his personality on national headquarters, and whether he can induce other state chairmen to adopt his hard-driving methods.

A story making the rounds in Ohio has it that one of the new chairman's henchmen inquired about his plans for reorganizing the national committee staff. "Reorganize, hell," Bliss is supposed to have replied, "I'm going to organize it."

Yet there are rocks awaiting along his path. In the first place he is a far cry from the traditional image of a national chairman. He is uncomfortable at large social affairs. Neither Perle Mesta nor Gwen Cafritz is going to be able to do much with him. Likewise, he is capable of giving as bad a speech as any front-line public figure since Calvin Coolidge. Nor does he intend even to establish residence in Washington.

Ever since he took over the Ohio party reins 16 years ago, Bliss has worked in Columbus on a Monday-to-Friday basis, spending week-ends at his Akron home, relaxing and tending to his thriving insurance business there. He said in Chicago he plans to do the same thing while serving as the national chairman.

The new GOP chairman is a free spender, as the party's fund-raisers soon will find out after he takes office April 1. He is an inveterate pollster who has for years in Ohio been conducting year-round continuing surveys in selected precincts in quest of shifts of opinion. On a nationwide basis this is going to cost money and so will the maintenance of a large field staff which Bliss will use to check on county and precinct organizations to see if they are loafing or are actually carrying out the year-round activity this perfectionist expects of them.

Bliss always has endeavored to keep his nose out of high policy matters, preferring to leave those to elected officials. Yet his insistence on a broader base for the party, particularly in the big cities and among Negroes, is bound to involve him in conflict with the GOP's right wing. Also he can look for trouble with Washington newsmen. He is cordial enough with reporters, but he seldom tells them anything of importance. He regards the results of his personal polls as top secret and has a deeply rooted distaste for televised panel shows.

He enjoys the professional respect of GOP leaders from Goldwater to Nelson Rockefeller and the Democratic opposition already has paid him the compliment of sounding the alarm over his selection. The Committee on Political Education, the political voice of organized labor, chronicled the elevation of Bliss to the national chairmanship under the headline: "Old Pro Replaces Burch. GOP Naming of Bliss Threatens Liberals in '66."

George F. Jenks

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ARE BRITISH VOTERS TURNING AGAINST THE LABOUR PARTY?

Wilson's Unhappy Hundred Days

London

Just try to envisage a nastier end to the promised 100 days of dynamic action by a Labour government. The Foreign Secretary, Patrick Gordon-Walker, is defeated, humiliated and out of office. Labour's operative majority in the Commons is cut back from five to three. Majorities do not come much smaller, except in Sweden. Yet in retrospect, the loss was needless. Gordon-Walker could have had a rock-hard Labour seat upcountry. He chose Leyton, which must have seemed safe enough for it was a quiet London suburb with a Labour majority of 8,000, yet he went down to a crushing defeat. Why?

None of the "special considerations," race included, provides the full answer. The racist candidate lost his

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deposit. Leyton has colored immigrants, 3,000 of them, but they are considered to be integrated. There is no ghetto. And the local Conservatives, unlike their counterparts at Smethwick last October, cannot be charged with calling on the color bar as an ally. True, the National Socialists, such as they are, and they are not very many, headline-hunted their way through the campaign. True, too, that Gordon-Walker carries a penalty of some sort as the fall guy for color politics in Britain. But this was known in advance, understood, and allowed for, as was the carpetbagger charge that his opponents worked on. And it was no secret either that a quarter of Leyton voters were old-age pensioners, and might well grumble at having to wait until April for their not inconsiderable pension increase. No, the essence of the shock is that the result carries in it, against all predictions, a swingeing indictment of the first three months of the new regime, and it was this that made the difference and sent the ex-Foreign Secretary to defeat.

Low Performance

Harold Wilson's first 100 days have not in fact been particularly dynamic – for which Labour has only its own propaganda to blame. Expectations were pitched high; performance ended low. The 15 percent boost in taxes on imports brought a retaliatory sterling crisis, followed by the protective increase in the Bank Rate, neatly undercutting the 15 percent surcharge itself. Mortgages are up, and with them prices, despite government efforts to shame them down again. In aviation and defense, cost-efficiency has proved no easy guide. The French stuck by the letter of the agreement with Britain to build jointly a supersonic Concorde airliner, and so the Wilson government is stuck with the high costs of Concorde; the hitherto disarmament-minded workers of Weybridge who were to build the new supersonic RAF fighter TSR-2 marched in protest through London, when the government proposed canceling it because it is costing $2.1 billion. In fact, the only plus so far is the Prime Minister's offering for an Atlantic Nuclear Force which is being considered by the Germans and others as an alternative to the proposal of the United States for a mixed-manned nuclear navy.

The ANF problem now passes to the new Foreign Minister, Mr. Michael Stewart. Sir Winston Churchill's illness and death allowed the proposed trip by the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary to Bonn and Berlin to be postponed. This was just as well for Mr. Stewart, who needs time to acclimatize himself to his new duties. So far he has devoted most of his energies to education and housing. He did go with Wilson and Gordon-Walker to Moscow last year, but no one seemed to know quite why, and until he shows his hand the suspicion must be that he is to play a muted Dean Rusk to Mr. Wilson's Lyndon Johnson. Stewart is one of the Labour Party's quietly influential figures. When Hugh Gaitskell died he was suggested as a compromise successor. He has been, however, a parliamentary rather than a public figure. In his new job he is rightly rated as a right-winger, more so than the Prime Minister, so he should be right-wing enough for most of the allies.

Meantime, the Conservatives can scarcely believe their luck. Nor do they yet know what to do with it. By chance, Patrick Gordon-Walker's defeat came only a few hours after they had in their own subtle way "done a Burch" on the Tory Party organization. Out went Lord Blakenham as chairman of the party. Blakenham is an ailing upper-crust Tory. In came Edward DuCann, aged 40, recently married, with a young child, educated at a school for the masses, and a successful, self-made businessman in Britain's mutual funds. DuCann has made it plain that the Conservative Party is out to capture the salaried white-collar workers on a program of youth and opportunity. The aim is to move left and stake out the middle ground before the next General Election.

Hastening the election will not be easy. Wilson and his Labour Party are on the ropes but not on the canvas, and it is difficult to see how the Conservatives can put them there at least until Easter. The Leyton victory must confirm Sir Alec Douglas-Home as Tory leader for the time being. He led his party to victory from a sick-bed – he has been ill with influenza – and more cannot reasonably be asked of any man. But Sir Alec is not by temperament or training the man to sense just where and when to plant the knockout punch, and in any case this will be more difficult than it may sound because of the equivocal position of the Liberals.

Jo Grimond's band of nine Liberals in Parliament now moves one stage nearer holding the balance between the Big Two. Grimond has already warned Labour that he is against steel nationalization. But he would not stand to gain from an election now. The Liberal kitty is not yet replenished after the last round, and it is in seats held by the Conservatives that the Liberals have their best chance of a breakthrough, not seats held by Labour.

The Prime Minister talks as one who has experienced a "little local difficulty." He will press on with the full Labour program, steel nationalization included, and let the Liberals and Conservatives do their damnedest. In practice he has no alternative. To call an election now would be to opt for suicide. Harold Wilson is not the man to go into exile at this stage of the game.

BRIAN WENHAM

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Vietnam Convoy

People, towns disappear in this strange war being fought in the extraordinarily beautiful mountains of the South Vietnam Highlands

South Vietnam has only two seasons – wet and dry – and this was the time of transformation. The sky each morning boiled with clouds; the afternoons were soft and blue, and the sun was like an open furnace door. Between times the rain came down, briefly and fiercely.

Ours was a six-truck convoy, each vehicle crammed with 20 or 30 Montagnards in battle dress. Small, fat goats ran bleating from the noise of our passage. The men grinned at us with gold-capped teeth; the women, barebreasted and grave, squatted by the roadside to ease the burden of their wicker packs, and watched us without any expression at all. Some of the children saluted; others fled with the goats.

There was a barbed-wire fence around each village. A black-uniformed militiaman guarded a barbed-wire gate which could be swung across the roadway at night, completing the perimeter. The huts of the village were fashioned from poles and thatch, and stood high off the ground on stilts, as if, a millenium ago, they had served lake-dwellers instead of mountain men.

As we drove, the villages were spaced at greater intervals. Finally we left the river valley behind us and climbed a mountain, on switchbacks supported only by a few boulders or a wall of rotting timbers. The trucks groaned in their lowest gear. Our Montagnard troopers seemed equally pained, but we crossed the mountain without causing a landslide or meeting an ambush, and we grinned at each other across the language barrier.

We came down upon a plain of scattered, umbrella-like trees. A small white obelisk stood beside the road, marking the spot where a French regimental combat team had been ambushed and destroyed 10 years before. Nearby were the rusting, weed-grown carcasses of two French armored cars. Our convoy passed the graveyard without sparing it a glance or a prayer: such sights are nothing unusual anywhere in South Vietnam.

The Highlands do not attract many travelers these days, even to such secure and pleasant oases as Pleiku and Dalat. Even the white hunters have ceased to tramp the mountains in search of tiger pelts. Virtually the only foreigners in the Highlands today are the US military advisers – which is the world's loss, because this is a place of extraordinary beauty. The Highlands cover two-thirds of South Vietnam and are covered mostly by rain-forest. Flying from Saigon to Pleiku (there are roads, but the only safe highway is the sky) is like skimming a frozen green sea.

Pleiku is the military and therefore civil center of the Highlands – a few paved streets and a few dozen small, open-front shops with corrugated roofs. It is the nearest thing to Shangri-la that I have seen on this earth. Blue-green mountains encircle it like a giant horseshoe, open to the south. The air is always cool, the sun is always hot, so that a man can regulate his climate simply by moving in and out of the shade. The colors are brilliant: the soft blue sky, the new rice kelly-green in the hollows, the earth red and black, flowering trees whose blossoms are a shade between gold and crimson, and vines that flower purple against the gates and arches of the town.

The Highland population averages out to five inhabitants per square mile. The people are not Vietnamese but tribal mountaineers who speak their own language, worship their own gods and live much as their ancestors did 500 years ago. The French called them Montagnards. The Vietnamese word for them is *moi*, which means "baboon." They are a sturdy, dark-skinned race, with none of the feline delicacy and cunning of the lowland Vietnamese. They are natural warriors, happily exchanging their crossbows for automatic rifles; the government recruits them to cut the Ho Chi Minh trail, and the Viet Cong recruits them to keep it open.

After the trucks put us down, we split into four sections, with two Americans and about 75 Montagnards in each. The Americans in my section were Russell Brooks and Michael Holland, both sergeants, both in their mid-twenties, neither speaking a word of Jarai, the local tribal language. They gave orders in sign language. The orders were usually interpreted by the Montagnard noncom, a grizzled, bandy-legged warrior called "Old Man," whose ears had been pierced in childhood and then weighted, so that loops of flesh hung down almost to his shoulders.

We spent five days in the mountains, marching 10 or 12 hours a day. Sometimes we were walking through open valleys, sometimes crawling through the bramble-bush. Sometimes, rarely, we were chasing guerrillas at

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a run. The Montagnards protected us with silent, smiling gestures. Do not walk on this trail: it is bristling with bamboo spikes. Do not touch this tree: its spines are sharp and its sap is poisonous.

Old Man could smell water, it seemed, and each time our canteens went dry he found the one clear pool of water in an otherwise dry creek bed. He did not approve of the iodine tablets we used to purify the water, or the army rations we carried in our packs. The Montagnards carried only rice, with a can or two of sardines for emergencies. The rest they foraged – a certain pulpy leaf, a round green fruit like an artichoke, apples no larger than cherries. Once I saw a Montagnard strip a white, fluffy mass from a tree, like a bundle of milkweed floss, which he wrapped in leaves and put into his pack. I picked up one bit; it was a woolly worm.

At night we bivouacked wherever the day's march had brought us. The Montagnards scattered in twos and threes to build thrifty little fires from twigs and dry leaves, with a few small stones to control the draft. One man in the group produced a fire-blackened pot and in this they cooked their rice, flavoring it with leaves they had plucked during the day. It took 20 minutes to cook the first batch of rice, 20 minutes to eat it and 20 minutes to cook the rice that they would eat cold for their breakfast the next morning.

"Who's Winning – the Forces of Freedom or the People's Democracies?"

Then they smoked. The Montagnards were issued four tobacco leaves per man per day; some chewed their ration, some crumbled it into massive, hand-carved pipes and others rolled it into cigars the size and shape of ice-cream cones. The acrid blue smoke curled about their heads.

By seven o'clock the sun was down; by seven-thirty our olive-green uniforms were melting into the dusk, and by eight it was altogether dark. The Montagnards simply stretched out and slept. Holland, Brooks and I had brought plastic ponchos, which we spread under us to discourage ants. As an extra comfort, I stuffed my hat with grass for a pillow. Lastly, we anointed ourselves with mosquito repellent. The trick was to fall asleep, and to stay asleep. This was not always easy in the Highlands, because the nights were chilly and the thirst of the day was so compelling that we continued to drink water throughout the night.

We were gathering refugees as we marched. Usually they were hiding in the thickest parts of the rain-forest – pathetic little bands of women, children and old men. Some were migrating in search of new valleys to farm. Others had fled their huts on the second day of this operation, when the government had assaulted a Viet Cong village with rockets, machinegun fire, and Vietnamese Rangers dropped in by helicopter. The refugees were usually hungry and often sick. Mike Holland is a medic, and he treated their sores and gave them vitamin pills. Then we marched them along with us. The children carried smaller children, and the adults carried towering packs and great clay water jugs. By the fifth day we had 30 refugees, two shaggy ponies, and a dozen cows in our column. Even the cows were mountaineers: they scrambled up cliffs that I could not climb without using my hands. The Viet Cong had drafted their young men; now we were taking the others back to government-controlled settlements.

Our last day's objective was a town recorded on the map as Tan Hoa. We could not find it. There was nothing where Tan Hoa should have been, except a road, a river and a grassy field where we spent the night. Next morning, as we were waiting for the helicopters which would take us out, we found some ancient fighting holes and a graveyard with fine granite tombstones, Gallic in design. That was all that remained of Tan Hoa – foxholes dating back to the Indochina War, a few French graves, and a name on a French-made map. All the rest had moldered in the 10 rainy seasons, and turned to dust in the 10 dry seasons, which separated their war from ours.

DANIEL FORD

MR. FORD *spent two months in South Vietnam as a free lance journalist. His first novel,* Now Comes Theodore, *will be published by Doubleday in the spring.*

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China–Birth Control and Bibles

by Ross Terrill

Canton

The descent into Canton presents a tableau of moonlit water of extraordinary beauty, constantly changing as the plane circles the city's environs. The terminal sported a red and green neon sign, and we were whisked toward it in torrential rain, while little boys held umbrellas over us, their arms stretched as high as possible. In the sticky heat we sipped weak tea and gazed blankly at a huge bust of Mao Tse-tung. Soon the China Travel Service had me in its care and I was speeding off to the Yang Cheng Hotel in a taxi with three Viennese.

I liked Canton. It is rather a ragged city, yet a gay one by comparison with Peking, and lacking the austere "official" atmosphere of the capital. In China today you are supposed to have a separate visa for each city visited. In Peking I had spent quite a long time securing the visa for Canton, but no one in Canton asked to see it, nor even to see my passport. The Cantonese interpreters even made little jokes once or twice about the tiresome supervision of the party secretary over the details of their daily work. "We sometimes get sick of their control over us," one said to me, "but we admit they are good organizers." I found much more open and pleasurable interest in Westerners in Canton than in Peking, and I noticed more groups of young people in the streets. There are even lovers who dare to hold hands and embrace in public, which is not true in the capital.

My interpreter usually came for me at 9:00 a.m., while I was still at breakfast, and announced an itinerary. He was like a party pamphlet on two legs, and before a visit to a specialized factory or institution he would carefully check on the English version of the terms likely to be mentioned in the discussion. With his aid, I was able to obtain some light on the question of population and birth control. One evening we were strolling in the Canton Cultural Park, a vast playground rather like the famous Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen, when my eye lit upon a "planned parenthood exhibition." Joining in with the crowd, we made a tour of it, much to the curiosity of the many young people in the pavilion. One section was given over to detailed displays of the usual contraceptive devices, which are available very cheaply. There were no pills. Another section consisted of pictorial dramas laden with the message that early marriage brings disaster – in nearly every case suicide – whereas late marriage, at say 28 or 30 years, brings a better spouse, a happier household and a vastly superior production record. A third section advocated abortion, with the aid of pictorial dramas that made it appear the "thing to do"; and a fourth treated sterilization in a similar fashion.

It seemed clear to me that the Chinese leaders are embarrassed by the enormous population of their country. I asked what is the present population and the answer was always "650 million," without question an underestimate. The 1953 census found the total to be 582 million, and the annual increase is at least two percent: on his African tour last year Chou En-lai mentioned a figure of two and a half percent. It is generally thought that the present population is at least 750 million, and that by 1980 it will be one billion. There are about 1,700 new Chinese *every hour*.

One of my days in Canton was a Sunday, and I asked to be taken to a Protestant church. There seemed to be no difficulty, although my interpreter warned me that he had never been to church before and might not know the "technical terms." We set out for the Church of the Saviour, one of the 14 Protestant parishes in Canton. The building was packed with about 400 people of all ages. Ushers brought us fans when they saw that we were sitting some distance from the nearest electric fan, and special efforts were made to ensure we had Bible, hymn book, order of service.

The service proceeded much as in a Western church. The music, and also the dress of the congregation, was more Western than at the church I had attended in Peking. I noticed at the end that the book from which the pianist (the organ was apparently being repaired) played the incidental music was *Concert Transcriptions of Favorite Hymns*, published in Pennsylvania. While I was at the piano, a small boy sat down and played Beethoven's *Für Elise*, anxious, I think, to show his knowledge of Western classical music.

After the last hymn, which was "Sweet Hour of Prayer" sung to a tune well-known in the West, and the exit of the clergy and choir, I was swept into a group of people and taken off to speak with the senior minister. Again, this was a contrast to my experience in Peking, where the presence of a Westerner seemed

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a slight embarrassment, at least in a group, and where I had to make rather calculated efforts to speak with the minister. I was told that there are 5,000 Protestants in Canton, and 105 "church workers" of various kinds, including staff secretaries of the YMCA and YWCA, 34 of them ordained ministers. There are a smaller number of Catholics gathered in five parishes.

As in Peking, it was not possible to obtain any literature published by the churches. "You must go to Shanghai to get that," I was told in both cities. But the YMCA in China has 26 city associations and over 100 staff secretaries – six of them in the Canton association, which has 130 members – and the YWCA is of similar strength. Like all other organizations, the churches and the "Y's" enjoy their niche in the society only on condition that they declare a basic, general loyalty to the Socialist revolution.

Although one quarter of the housing floor space in Canton has been built since 1949, there is still an acute shortage. In the alleyways which we inspected, eight and 10 people were living in single rooms above – sometimes precariously above – their little sidewalk enterprises. All of the enterprises, I was told, are either state-owned or run by cooperatives. I had checked on this a number of times, so when we passed a small boy portioning out tiny piles of peanuts for sale at next to nothing, my interpreter smilingly volunteered the opinion that this was the one capitalist shop we had seen in Canton: "How could we nationalize him? He is here today but he may be gone tomorrow."

These alleyways were veritable theaters of Chinese life, and different from alleyways I had ever seen before, even in Hong Kong and Singapore. They are crowded and they are poor, yet no one is in rags, no one is sitting or lying around in that state of hopeless-looking poverty so familiar in India and some other parts of Asia. The clothing is standardized to an extreme degree, but it is neat and adequate. Everyone seems to have a task – this is one of the most striking things – and consequently no one comes running after you in an ingratiating way to beg something, or even to *sell* something. You are a visitor and you are respected, but you are not besieged and you are not regarded as any special kind of mortal. As I saw it and felt it, the thing that was different was that in the midst of poverty there was nevertheless dignity.

This is the last of four reports.

The Meritocracy of Labor

by Murray Kempton

The most public life Ernest Green is ever likely to know is now not quite seven years back in his past. He is only 23 now. Ernest Green was the first Negro to be graduated from Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. He was for awhile a subject for all the news photos, a thin child with glasses walking through the crowds in the fall of 1957, and then still a thin child in a black robe with his classmates in the spring of 1958, a graduate, thanks to the protection of federal troops.

He was one of 601 seniors at Central High School. Just 14 of them wrote their good wishes in his class yearbook.

"I really admire you, Ernest," the secretary of Central High's student government wrote under her picture. "I doubt if I could have done half so much if our positions were reversed. May you achieve all your goals and they be the best."

The fifties focused on the special Negro, and his story was always inspiriting. Now the sixties are confronted with the ordinary Negro and he has almost no story at all.

Ernest Green departed the South to complete his education at Michigan State University; and few of the strangers who saw him in his singular high school year can have thought much about him since. The other day I went to Brooklyn, from some small curiosity about the ordinary Negro, and came upon Ernest Green.

He has found his goal in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area, which is Brooklyn's Harlem. He spends his days trying to find jobs for young Negroes as plumbers, electricians and carpenters.

It would be too much to say that it is as hard for an ordinary young Negro in New York to be taken on as an apprentice in a skilled trade as it is for an extra-

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ordinary young Negro to be admitted to a Southern university. But it would not be a great deal too much to say.

In 1958, the year of Ernest Green's high school graduation, the New York State Commission Against Discrimination made an ethnic survey of the apprentices in the state's construction industry. Apprentice training is the only means of entry into those building crafts which have always been the best general opportunity for comfort and pride available to the young whose education ends with high school. In 1958, the State Commission Against Discrimination estimated that perhaps two percent of New York's 15,000 construction apprentices-in-training were Negroes.

That estimate may have been generous. We have lived since through seven years of numberless protest demonstrations by Negroes and hardly more computable responses in plea and intervention by government. The State Commission Against Discrimination has become the State Commission for Human Rights. For all that has been said, no responsible agency will assert yet that more than two percent of the construction apprentices now in training are Negroes.

The skilled-job market has, of course, always been controlled by a company of trade unions which have been the only medieval institutions in the city, being hierarchic, feudal and frequently consanguine. Apprentices, more often than not, have been connected by blood or friendship with full members of these guilds. The tradition of the job as property to be bequeathed or given away has done as much to bar the Negro as any lively prejudice against his color. There were 3,000 union plumbers in Brooklyn a year ago last August; nine of them were Negroes, none of whom held the "A" membership card and earned the $4.10-an-hour wage which are the rewards for survivors of the apprenticeship stage.

Last spring the State Commission for Human Rights found Local Union 28 of the Sheet Metal Workers Union guilty of discriminating against Negro applicants. Local 28 had and has 3,300 members, none of whom was or is a Negro. Some 26 of the 30 applicants accepted for the local's apprenticeship program in July, 1963, were related to union members. A journeyman fitting the standards of this guild earns up to $6.15 an hour. Under pressure of court orders, Local 28 has agreed to give up selecting its apprentices by family bond and to subject all applicants to an aptitude test supervised by New York University next month.

A chance in the construction crafts is coming then to depend less on favor and more on objective standards. Last year, the Taconic Foundation made a grant to the Workers Defense League to seek out young Negroes to take these tests. The League set up its apprenticeship program headquarters in the most impressive building on its shabby block on Fulton Street. Ray Murphy, holder of the master's degree in clinical psychology, which is so much easier for a Negro than a plumbers union work permit, is its director and Ernest Green is his assistant.

What Poor Schooling Can Do

They have perhaps 150 young Negroes on their rolls as prospective applicants to any apprenticeship class a union opens up. None of them went to schools remotely as good as Central High in Little Rock. They had no chance against the barriers of custom; and now they do not have a greatly improved chance under the test of merit.

Their common problem can be embodied in the case of Arthur Harris, 19, a graduate of Thomas Edison Vocational High School in Queens, where he was selected above all his fellow seniors as laureate in the plumbing award of the ladies auxiliary of the Master Plumbers Association. In April, 1964, Arthur Harris tried to follow the bent indicated for the best plumber in his class by enrolling in the apprenticeship class sponsored by Brooklyn Plumbers Local Number One. Local One did not answer his letter; Ray Murphy intervened and in October the education committee of Local One agreed to let Arthur Harris take its aptitude examination.

The new merit system for neophyte plumbers administered by New York University is not one of rigid intellectual standards. An applicant, to be eligible for apprentice training, need only show himself above the level of the bottom quarter of the average American high school senior class. Arthur Harris could, then, have passed with a score of 100 out of a possible 400. He scored a 63; and, at that, may have done no worse than a majority of the other applicants, all of them white graduates of New York City schools. No more than 20 of the 60 testees seem to have achieved what in essence is a 25 percent passing grade.

Arthur Harris scored *five* out of a possible 100 in the category of "mental alertness"; *seven* out of a possible 100 in mechanical reasoning and *five* out of a possible 100 in numerical ability.

Ray Murphy guesses that a young man who had mastered the elements of the ninth grade would achieve the passing mark on this test. There can be no sensible quarrel with the honesty of the academicians who conducted it. We can only conclude then that the best prospective plumber in a New York City vocational school had been equipped by his teachers to rank less than a point above the *lowest five percent of American high school graduates* in alertness, mechanical capacity and skill with numbers.

Arthur Harris has dropped from sight since this

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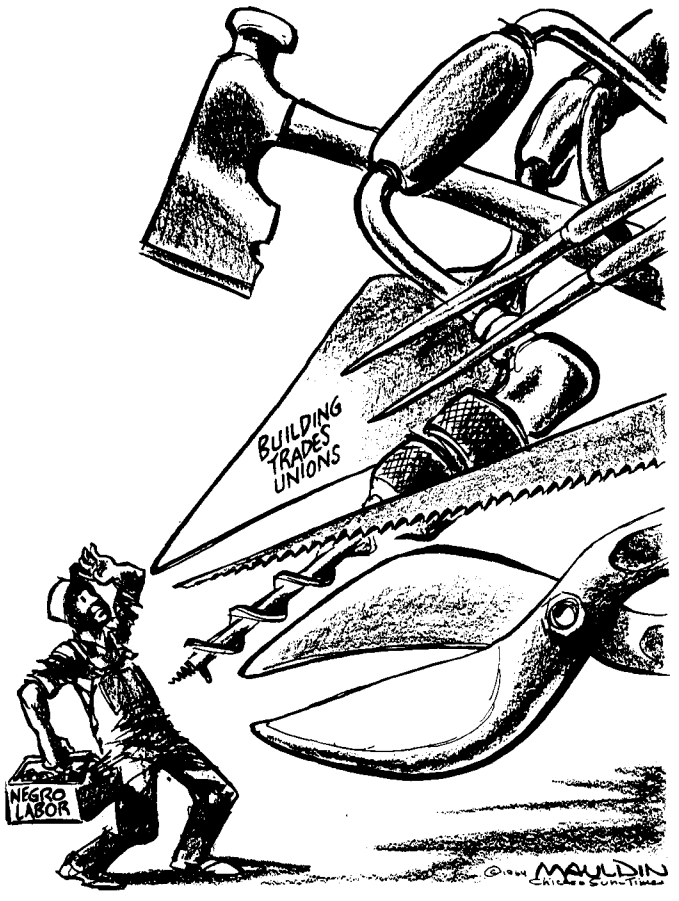
disaster; Ernest Green is afraid that he has given up. Most of the young Negroes who sit in Bedford Stuyvesant are like Arthur Harris and other graduates of vocational high schools, which means that they belong to a category of persons trained for no vocation at all.

We can assume, however, that if the Taconic Foundation and Ray Murphy and Ernest Green are patient enough, the building trades unions will have to yield their privileges and accept their apprentices on objective merit. But even that surrender is by no means imminent; most of Ray Murphy's day is spent in the continual interventions necessary to persuade or press union officials to give his charges a chance just to take their tests.

There is the case of Emmett Washington, a member of the maintenance division of Local Three of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. In June of 1964, Local Three sent out letters to its members asking if they had any sons who might like to be apprentices to its construction division. Emmett Washington wrote back that he had no son but that he himself was a member of the union still young enough to be an apprentice. He got no answer; Murphy inquired for him and was told that the local had decided not to hold a class this year.



Barricade

"I took one kid down to Local Two of the plumbers union to see a man named Kearns who is secretary of their joint apprenticeship committee," Murphy said. "When we got there Kearns came out and said that Kearns wasn't in. We had to go back again before he'd give him an application. I'm still not sure when he will take a test.

"I took two kids to Local 40 of the iron workers last October and they told us they weren't interviewing applicants unless they were accompanied by two sponsors who were union members. They had promised two years ago that they would no longer require sponsors. I got in touch with the secretary-treasurer and reminded him of some of these things and he called back to say that it had all been a mistake and we should apply again.

"We went back down and while we were waiting, one of the white applicants said we could go in first because his *sponsors* hadn't gotten there yet. Anyway, we were finally able to make an application 10 days ago."

Same as in the South

Still, the tests are coming; the problems that cannot be righted by any pressure at Murphy's command is the condition of the tested. When we think of the ordinary Negro, we recognize that the New York school system has settled into a mold as segregated in class as anything we have deplored in European education. The South, of course, traditionally drew the distinction of race; the academic public high school was for white children; the industrial or vocational school was for Negroes. New York has come unconsciously to a system which, in essentials, ends with the same result.

A child's pattern is set when he is 13 and ready to enter the complex of city high schools. He may, if he can pass its tests, enter an academic high school and hope to go on to a municipal college, where the tuition is still free and open to any high school graduate with an average of 85 in his academic subjects. Short of that, he can try for a technical high school, where the academic standards are also exclusive and where he can learn a trade. Failing all tests, there is no place for him except the vocational school where he learns almost nothing and serves no purpose beyond the requirements of the compulsory school education.

On the bulletin board in Ernest Green's office, there is a clipping from *The New York Times* telling the story of Michael Stewart, the first Negro apprentice to be accepted by Local 40 of the iron workers union. " 'His father, Malcolm Stewart, writes technical manuals for Sperry Rand'," Ernest Green read from the *Times*. "Now there's a working class background."

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Sheet Metal Workers Local 28 sent out word last week that on February 13, it would conduct its objective test for apprentice applicants as prescribed by court order. Murphy and Green think they might have as many as 60 candidates; Dr. Kenneth Clark has agreed to hold classes for them at the Northside Center for Child Development and do, in the little time remaining, whatever private tutoring can to repair the damage which has been done by public education.

"You know, five of our kids did pass the electricians' apprenticeship tests on Long Island," Ernest Green said. "Of course, three of them were college students. They were over-qualified. Maybe I'll take the sheet metal test myself."

He is the graduate of a Southern high school and a Midwestern university. It does not seem that attainments significantly less impressive will soon give a Negro a chance to work at a skilled trade in New York.

LBJ's School Program

A Revolution in American Education?

by Christopher Jencks

It is too early to be sure, but conversation on Capitol Hill suggests that the Administration's education bills are likely to be enacted with only minor amendments. If so, the result could be a revolution in American education. The proposals for elementary and secondary education are the most far-reaching and radical ever to come from the White House. Instead of simply asking Congress to give the educational establishment more money to continue doing the same things it has done for years, the proposed legislation would attempt to change the ways of that establishment by broadening its political, social and intellectual base. The old feudal pattern of local sovereignty and state regulation, which worked to the disadvantage of the Catholics, the poor and the intellectuals, is at long last to be assaulted. And the assault, instead of being led by political outsiders, will have the fiscal and administrative backing of the federal government.

Like all Johnson proposals, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is being promoted with a highly traditional rhetoric. The authors have even written a provision forbidding federal "direction, supervision or control" over any aspect of education. Nevertheless, anyone who looks carefully at the bill will see that it represents a major indictment of the educational system as managed by state and local boards of education and school superintendents, and that it proposes to remedy many of their failures by substituting the political judgments and academic priorities of the Congress and the US Commissioner of Education.

So far as the President is concerned, the most important failure of the state and local authorities seems to be the combination of incompetence and indifference which has excluded the poor from many of the benefits of public education. This failure is beginning to have serious political consequences. The Democratic Party has since 1929 had the overwhelming support of the blue collar classes. The party's ability to retain this support, and to contain the nascent extremism and violence in this group, has depended in good part on providing schooling which led to jobs and a chance for at least a few to move up in the world. Today the schools are not doing that job, and the explosive consequences are increasingly obvious – especially in the Negro ghettoes. Unemployment and violence threaten to undermine the coalition of ethnic minorities which has been one of the primary sources of Democratic voting strength.

The basic reasons for the school's failure to do what needs to be done for the poor are clear. Education has become largely a competitive sport, valued by the public because it can set their children apart from others and ensure them a larger share of wealth and power. There are only a limited number of places in the "top" colleges and professional schools, and only

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a finite number of jobs which provide generous salaries and a chance to exercise responsibility. Competition for these openings is rough, and even the most enlightened parent will fight to ensure his children a more than "equal" chance at them; *his* children must attend the "best" schools, be they public or private. Such ambitions mean that every time the public schools in a neighboring district are improved, the public schools in one's own district have to be improved equally – or a little more. Hence although middle-class parents seldom consciously oppose improving schools which serve the poor, they do resist efforts to narrow the gap between these schools and those which serve their own children.

The Children of the Poor

The most obvious example is found in the formulas by which legislatures have allocated state aid money to local school districts. Traditionally, these formulas were rigged to give special help to poor rural districts, which had large numbers of representatives in state legislatures. Urban areas got back less state aid than they contributed in state taxes. In recent years however, many state aid formulas have been revised, usually at the behest of professional educators, to reward districts which live up to or exceed certain "minimal" standards of performance set by the state department of education. This "incentive" system has often benefited wealthy districts, especially suburban ones, while penalizing poor districts which can meet minimal standards only by heroic tax effort. The reapportionment of state legislatures will presumably accelerate this tendency, since for the most part it will give the rich suburbanites more votes and the dwindling farmers fewer.

Against this background the Administration's proposals look courageous. Out of $1.25 billion to be spent on elementary and secondary education in fiscal 1965-66, the President is asking that $1 billion go directly to help the children of the poor. The formula for allocating federal funds would be based on the number of children in each school district whose families had annual incomes of less than $2,000. For each such child a district would receive a payment equal to half the average per-pupil expenditure in the state. This formula would enable Mississippi, for example, to increase its current school expenditures by about 20 percent, while a state like California could spend only about three percent more. It would also mean that when Mississippi got its check from Washington it would have to allocate the money to local districts on a basis which corresponds at least crudely with need, rather than with political influence.

The difference between this proposal and the "general aid" programs vainly submitted to Congress by Presidents Kennedy, Eisenhower and Truman is a measure both of the political impact of last November's elections and of Lyndon Johnson's genius in making anti-poverty programs seem respectable. Earlier proposals for general aid to education were primarily intended to shift part of the cost of local schools from the state sales taxes and local property taxes to federal income taxes. This meant a shift from mildly regressive to mildly progressive taxes, but that was by no means the major purpose of the proposals; their aim was to increase the total burden of education taxes on everyone. In addition, the proposal sought to include some kind of "equalization" formula which would give the poor Southern and Mountain states more money per pupil than the rich states of the East and West Coasts. But again, "equalization" was never the fundamental objective; it was a gimmick whose main purpose was to make a controversial proposal attractive to wavering Southerners. The basic indifference of the proponents of general aid to equalization was indicated by their unanimous readiness to let state legislators allocate federal funds among local school districts according to any formula they liked, be it progressive or regressive.

If I am right in suggesting that education is in large part a competitive enterprise, what may be shaping up is a contest in which the middle classes try to use their control over state and local government to get more money for their own schools, while the poor use whatever political and emotional leverage they have on the federal government to get more for theirs. Whether the result of this contest will be to widen or narrow the gap between rich and poor will depend on whether the White House plays for keeps or only for show. The constitutional and fiscal powers of the federal government are more than sufficient to prevent state and local powers being used for the selfish ends of a single class, but the rhetoric of "local control" may prevent these powers from being used.

The battle, if there is to be one, will probably be joined over state aid formulas. The Johnson education bill would forbid any state to revise its formula so as to offset the effect of the proposed federal legislation. This provision was inserted to prevent state legislatures from doing what many have done with regard to federal assistance for "impacted areas," namely reducing the state aid to which a district is entitled by the amount it gets from Washington. The long-term problem is not, however, to prevent states from reducing their aid to poor areas. It is to prevent their raising payments to rich districts faster than Washington raises payments to poor ones. If a state revises its aid formula to reward districts which are already doing a good job, instead of trying to help those which are

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doing badly because of an inadequate tax base, will federal assistance to the state be cut? Not if the President is Lyndon Johnson – though the wording of the proposed legislation might seem to require it.

President Johnson's efforts to make the public schools serve the poor as well as the prosperous have been matched by a somewhat less wholehearted effort to make them serve Catholics as well as non-Catholics. Half the Catholic children in America now attend parochial schools, and on paper these schools bear a marked resemblance to the slum schools on which so much concern is now being focused. Parochial schools are usually housed in older buildings than public schools, their classes larger, their textbooks more outmoded, their teachers worse paid and worse prepared, their libraries less adequate. Yet it may be doubted whether President Johnson's concern with Catholic education derived from such statistics. Nor is there any reason why it should have done so. While parochial schools may have some of the external attributes of slum schools, a recent survey by Andrew Greeley, Peter Rossi and Leonard Pinto of the University of Chicago shows that they mostly cater to very different sorts of children. Catholics who attend parochial schools come from wealthier and better educated families than Catholics who attend public schools. Ethnically, parochial school families are likely to trace their ancestry back to the "old" rather than the "new" immigrants, to countries in Northern Europe which had been exposed to the mixed blessings of Protestantism rather than to Mediterranean countries which had not. Italian, Puerto Rican and Mexican Catholics seem to have a particularly marked allergy to sending their children to parochial schools, while French and Irish Catholics are the parochial schools' most loyal supporters. Yet even when these differences are taken into account, and parochial school Catholics are compared to socially similar Catholics who attend public school, the survey seems to show that those who attend parochial school are more likely to graduate from secondary school, more likely to attend college, and more likely to land a good job.

Bearing this in mind it is understandable that the Administration should give the improvement of the parochial schools a rather low priority. But the Administration *is* concerned about doing enough for the parochial schools to win support from the Catholic hierarchy for federal aid to education, or failing that to win at least neutrality. With this in view, the Administration has offered federal support for whatever portion of Catholic education the hierarchy is willing to place under public control. How much or how little will be left to the prejudices and finances of each parish, and to a lesser extent of each school district. "Dual enrollment," as the new bill rechristens "shared time," may involve nothing more than sending a few parochial school boys to the public school for work in expensive vocational training facilities, or it may mean sending Catholic students to the public school for science, mathematics, foreign languages, vocational training, and even physical exercise. Federal funds will also be available to buy library books and textbooks for parochial schools, but the list of books which can be purchased will be determined by the secular board of education, not by the hierarchy. How far the parochial schools will go in secularizing their texts and libraries remains to be seen. Some have already gone far.

While these proposals are constitutionally and politically sound, they will probably not do as much to narrow the gap between Catholic and non-Catholic as Mr. Johnson hopes to do in narrowing the gap between rich and poor. It is true that Catholics often resent paying ever higher property taxes to support public schools their children do not attend, that such resentment among voters has made improvements in public education increasingly difficult in some communities, and that shared time might be (and sometimes has been) a way around this dilemma. This would be especially true if the principle were extended so that, for example, a remedial reading teacher on the public payroll could spend two mornings a week working in the parochial school, instead of requiring each slow reader in the parochial school to go to the public school for such instruction. But will the proposed federal program, confined as it is to low-income children, provide enough incentive to force cooperation on public and parochial schools which largely serve middle-class families? In many cases the answer will probably be no. If Washington is going to lead local educators out of their present impasse, it will probably have to go further than it has so far in promoting cooperation. But the Administration's bill is an excellent beginning.

Educational Centers

The third area of federal innovation, and in many respects the most unsettling to the established system of state and local control, is the effort to bring new kinds of people into local public education. The recent history of this dream goes back to the middle 1950's, when the National Science Foundation and a number of private groups discovered that high school science courses were being taught by men who not only were not scientists but who had not the slightest idea what scientists did. This discovery led to an effort to get working scientists involved in public education, first as curriculum reformers, then as teachers of science teachers, and most recently as part-time teachers of public school students. The prestige of the university scientist was so great that the public schools often felt

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compelled to accept their advice and assistance, but efforts to generalize the pattern to other subjects were less successful. Washington reformers have been trying to engage musicians in music education, artists in art education, novelists and poets in the teaching of English, and businessmen in vocational training. They have also sought to involve not just the public schools but a wide range of public and quasi-public institutions in the education of the young: colleges and universities, libraries, museums, theaters, newspapers, politicians, and even the League of Women Voters. Such suggestions have seldom been received enthusiastically by local school administrators, who are jealous of their power, skeptical of know-it-all outsiders, and convinced that what they need is more support for what they are already doing, not proposals for new things.

The Administration's efforts to change all this will be conducted through institutions known as Supplementary Educational Centers. These will be financed by grants from the US Office of Education, and controlled by boards which are supposed to include representatives not only of the local school system but of other relevant institutions. The Centers will be able to do almost anything the Office of Education (or anyone else) gives them money to do: make television programs, set up specialized occupational training programs, provide additional guidance and counseling (whatever that may mean), teach subjects not being taught in the regular public schools, and most important, teach established subjects in new ways. The Centers will be free to hire the uncertified, to use part-time instructors, and to hire people jointly with a university or other institution.

Cosmopolitan Values?

Whether such institutions can actually germinate a revolution in American education will depend on how they are administered. At worst, the local educators may make only nominal efforts to cooperate with other institutions and individuals in their communities, submitting proposals to Washington which merely call for hiring guidance officers to talk dropouts into sticking it out for another year, or for buying more electronic gadgets nobody knows how to use properly. At best, there will be stiff competition for the $100 million available for these Centers in fiscal 1965-66; the US Office will approve the more daring and radical proposals; and the stodgier school superintendents will get the message and return with more imaginative ideas next year. Being dependent for survival on their ability to impress Washington with their value to local students, the Centers may feel compelled to try things which the local public schools are reluctant to attempt. They may even become outposts for cosmopolitan values, at least partially immune to the prevailing local orthodoxies and self-satisfactions. If their example is then taken up in the public schools, so much the better. But even if it is not, local students who find the public schools claustrophobic may for the first time have an alternative in the federally sponsored Centers.

Unfortunately, grants for Centers will be evaluated not by the Bureau of the Budget or the Office of Science and Technology, which were largely responsible for getting the Centers into the President's program, but by the US Office of Education, many of whose officials are as distrustful as local schoolmen of the ideas and individuals behind the Centers. Had the matter been left solely to the Office, the Centers might not even have been included in the Johnson proposals, or at least not in their present promising form.

Indeed, it seems to me that the most serious defect of the whole Johnson program is the fact that it will be administered by people who are partially or completely out of sympathy with its fundamental objectives. Enormous reliance is being placed on the states, and especially on beefed-up state departments of education, which are unprepared for these new tasks. The same is true of many parts of the Office of Education. Leaving almost everything to the states is meant to reassure skeptical Congressmen who are worried (not without reason) about a federal takeover. But politics are not the only motive. There is no group of men and women anywhere in America ready to run the kind of program which the President's proposals envision. The only alternative to placing power in the hands of the states would be to place it in nobody's hands, at least for the moment. Nevertheless, instead of trying to work through the state departments of education, the Administration might have taken the position (privately) that most state departments are incompetent. A new division of the Office of Education could then have been established, with new men running it. For a year or two this would have meant near anarchy, and much money would have been wasted on projects which the Office had neither the time nor the skill to evaluate. In the long run, a new agency would have been able to draft the talented individuals who will inevitably surface once new programs go into action. The Administration's chosen approach, on the other hand, will place enormous power in the hands of established mediocrities, and will work against the appearance of new men and new ideas. Nor will it prevent waste, for the state education departments are riddled with incompetents who will endorse every bad check presented to them.

Still, for all their limitations, President Johnson's proposals – if enacted – will almost certainly do more for elementary and secondary education than any previously sent to Congress.

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The Mind of the Poor

by Robert Coles

As I was reading this collection of articles by social scientists about the tensions and worries of the poor, and the means of allaying them possible to various communities, our infant son began one of his regular bouts of crying – and it was quickly relieved by all the food he wanted and needed. Moreover, his mother did not give him that food in a nervous gesture of sacrifice.

Mental Health of the Poor
edited by Frank Riessman,
Jerome Cohen, and Arthur Pearl
(Free Press; $9.95)

She, too, has enough to eat. If she didn't, and if there weren't much wholesome food available to the little boy, I imagine he would begin to feel doubtful about the world, suspicious about the helpfulness of people in it and apprehensive about the reliability of any offer or promise of one. Eventually he would grow into a person who is distrustful, guarded, perhaps inertly unwilling to risk himself in the face of any challenge. Who, after all, can call a beggar "paranoid" when the beggar doubts that many walking by him care whether he starves or not? The fact that some of us might do just that is presumably one of the chief fears inspiring this excellent gathering of essays.

Of course, long before the essays in this book were written, and certainly before poverty became – once again – a fit and prevalent concern in our national life, writers like Dostoevsky *(Poor People, The Downtrodden and Offended)* or Zola *(Germinal, L'Assomoir)* knew what happens when hungry parents feed their children meagerly. Parents who have tightened their belts again and again become irritable and eventually apathetic or nasty. Their children cry long and hard from their empty stomachs until their minds and bodies accustom themselves to reduced and uncertain rations. Meanwhile the rest of us, out of no special sinfulness, find it hard to imagine what it is like to be needy; what it is like for a parent to feel it necessary to turn a deaf ear to a hungry child, or a skimpily clothed one; what it is like to feel lowly and weak, and to have to teach the sense of shame and humiliation that go with that condition to one's children. While we worry about the psychological consequences of denying our children's cries for toys or particularly tasty dishes, most of the world's parents would look upon that order of fearfulness as an unobtainable bliss.

It would seem to be an easy matter to explain to a nation as generally interested in childhood, or in the life of the mind as it develops over time, what happens psychologically to children whose parents can't find work, have trouble fitting into our scheme of things socially or politically, don't have good schools for their children to attend, and bring them up in homes where rats lunge at them, or cold weather gives them frostbite. It should be, but often isn't.

Part of the trouble lies in the willful, mocking disinterest of some whose cozy living seems to demand of them only nervous – perhaps even guilty – scorn for those who do not share it. Yet, I think most of us simply have no idea what is about us, no idea that in a middle-class neighborhood in New York City the infant mortality rate is 13.8 (per 1,000 live births) while in a slum section nearby it is twice that (27.0); or that the same holds in county after county in the nation.

This book gathers together over 50 articles by social scientists who are struggling to learn about what hap-

Roman Portrait Busts

Others in museums pass them by,
but I, I
am drawn like a maggot to meat
by their pupilless eyes
and their putrefying individuality.

They are, these Livias and Marcuses,
these pouting dead Octavias,
no two alike: never has art
so whorishly submitted
to the importunities of the real.

In good conscience one must admire
the drab lack of exaggeration,
the way each head,
crone's, consul's, or child's,
is neither bigger nor smaller than life.

Their eyes taste awful.
It is deliciously vile
to see them still there, unsoftened
by time, unforeshortened, their skulls
not flattened one whit by history.

JOHN UPDIKE

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pens to the children who *do* survive the initial hurdle of being born into poverty. It is concerned with what it calls "new treatment approaches for low income people." Right off the editors make it clear that the problem is not a matter of merely offering aid to people in need of it – though that is surely a beginning. Long years of impoverished isolation result in habits and sets of mind on the part of people who try to live with the kind of life that is their inheritance. In making that attempt they may ignore or assault the laws or customs held dear by others, or even falter before the practices of their own neighborhood.

It is quite impressive, and reveals a good deal about some of our social scientists, to witness their readiness to go into factories or ghettoes, to draw near narcotics addicts and delinquents, all in pursuit of knowledge about them which can then be communicated to others who are interested. It is additionally moving to find many of the contributors looking at themselves and their own blind spots with scrupulous and even painful honesty. Many of the papers deal with complicated problems of ascertaining the incidence of mental illness in groups like the poor, the criminal or the outcast; or with ways of treating people who do not talk and think as the doctor or social worker do; or with describing the habits of factory workers or various minorities or drug users, and drawing from such material conclusions for those who are interested in helping them with their special problems.

What almost all of the papers share is a determined wish to find a common humanity in the educated, comfortable observer and the relatively impoverished people being studied. What will be discovered under such circumstances will lead to a kind of assistance in keeping with the essential respect due all human life. Nowhere does that spirit of research come across more strongly than in a paper like Arthur Pearl's, which lets a narcotics addict tell his own story; or in one like John Spiegel's, which sacrifices nothing to its interest in careful methodological formulation, yet emerges with a touching and frank discussion of how the social and cultural history of the doctor limits and puts to a test his ability to do research with those who are "different."

I had one problem going through this book: the language in some of the papers is impossible. Perfectly beautiful ideals and earnest effort crying for plain, understandable description go down the drain of murky, opaque sentences, some of them forcing the reader to question either his intelligence or his sanity.

I don't think the problem is merely one of professional convention or unfortunate taste. Many of these papers might well have been written in simple language with no renunciation of precision or scientific relevance. Indeed, several of these authors have shown considerable courage in taking on subjects sometimes considered inappropriate for study by many of their colleagues. I suspect that what some of the authors feared is a more general loss of respect for their work at the hands of a culture which accepts technical talk as somehow a necessary part of the climate of miracles which has showered airplanes, antibiotics, and lunar probes upon us. The poor in our nation have been caught up and left behind in this very "scientific" and industrial process.

Daniel Defoe put together a fictional journal that tells posterity what happened to the rich and poor, separately and differently, in the wake of a terrible plague in London in 1665. It is a splendid job of seeing the large and small events in a disaster and putting

A book for people who have had years of experience but feel that their sexual relationships are not complete and that it can be bettered

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A book of love that stormed the best-seller lists in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Holland. This is the complete, unabridged, illustrated edition of the most important book on sex today. The authors – both doctors – treat the question of sexual relationships with complete candor. Their disclosures will prove enlightening, and be a guide to a complete and happier sex life.

"The authors describe the mechanics, the variations, the pleasures and the difficulties of the sexual act. They give exact instructions on practical details. . . . It is time the subject of sex was treated with less reserve and more common sense. This book is supposedly aimed at couples in their thirties and forties, but might well be given to the most ignorant beginners." – **TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT**

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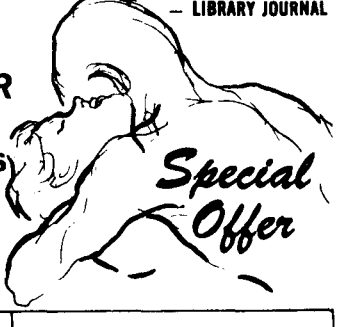

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them to everyday word. Over two centuries later Freud prepared the way for many of the papers in this volume without calling upon a special language to seal his discoveries. Indeed, in one of his books he insisted that his ideas and work be expressed in the clear, ordinary language of all of us. Today in Sicily, Danilo Dolci has graced us with books like *To Feed the Hungry* and *Waste*. He, too, spares us no details, leaves us as deeply and honorably informed as any scientist could ever wish, and all the more so because he dares to speak directly to us, and with humor, indignation, and passion.

Pride, as many of these authors have noted, can defy hardship and poverty. When a group of professions are coming into their own – and these essays give us proof of that – a pride that ignores earlier fears of scientific inadequacy (and the tiresome language that went into fighting those fears) would seem equally appropriate. A way of talking about people and their lives can fast become a way of thinking about them, and finally a manner of getting along with them. Jargon may be an aesthetic problem, but dehumanization in its many expressions is one of the central problems of our time.

In any event, what is to be gathered from reading the diverse papers in this book is the general proposition that the abstraction "mental health" must be continually tied down to the social and economic background of those who presumably have or don't have it. In paper after paper, whether dealing with delinquency in the poor, violence or social protest in the poor, or simply the matter of communicating with them and obtaining information from them, the lesson emerges: psychiatrists must be careful indeed in applying middle class standards – including those of their own profession – to people whose lives are markedly unlike those of the middle class. Now that we have that lesson carefully documented, perhaps more of us psychiatrists will get on with the next business of the day, extending our work and modifying it so as to reach people now out of our sights and minds.

O Brave New Hell

by Honor Tracy

I suspect that some reviewer at some moment used the well-loved reviewers' word "compassion" in discussing Mr. Angus Wilson's work, and that Mr. Wilson was much enamored of it. If so, here is one more argument against reading, let alone heeding, anything such people may say about oneself. Mr. Wilson's superb gift is not for comedy but for satire, and waspishness is essential to it: moreover, if one who has often admired and enjoyed him may say so, Mr. Wilson's own waspishness is innate and his attempts to shake it off can only land him in sentimentality.

Late Call
by Angus Wilson
(Viking; $4.95)

He has always been a brave and ambitious writer, and the problem he set himself in *Late Call* was a truly formidable one: how, namely, was he to arouse and maintain the reader's interest in an elderly woman of no special quality at the least significant phase of her life? If he failed there he must fail altogether, for no amount of peripheral brilliance makes up for a hollow center and, despite the fidelity of his observation, the subtlety of his drawing, he has not quite brought it off. Our sympathy goes in the final analysis to Sylvia Calvert's predicament, not to Sylvia herself: she, for all her loyalty and pluck, is merely a fat and foolish old thing.

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little money. She accepts the offer of a home from her son, headmaster of the Council school in a new town, and her experiences with this dreadful man and his children and friends take up most of the book.

First, however, there is a long prologue called *The Hot Summer of 1911*, and what Mr. Wilson intended by it I dare not even conjecture. It describes archly, cosily, and with frequent bursts of superfine writing, an incident in Sylvia's childhood that bears on her late life in no discernible way. She is larking about by some water with a younger child whose mother, a lady of "advanced" opinions, has made rather a pet of her. One of this lady's hobby-horses is dress reform and the importance of feeling free, which the innocent Sylvia interprets in the widest sense. The children gaily divest themselves of their garments one by one and are spotted by guffawing yokels, Sylvia is sent home in disgrace by her patron and cruelly thrashed by her Pa.

That is all about that. The story now skips abruptly to the present time, with Sylvia and husband Arthur on their way to the new life. Harold's house, "The Sycamores," is decorated in mustard yellow and white and is centrally heated like the reptile house in a Zoo: very soon the old folk are in trouble for turning the heat down. Harold himself is one of Mr. Wilson's more appalling creations and, at the same time, utterly and devastatingly true to life. He designs his own grisly Christmas cards, intending them to be funny: one has a drawing of himself wearing wings and carolling in the bath over the caption "Hark the Harold Angel Sings!" When giving a party he sends out more cards, inviting people to "A Nip and a Nibble." He is cross, facetious, pompous and martyred in turn, brimming over with principles and theories and nonsense: he calls his daughter a snob for preferring the company of gentlefolk and liking to ride, but is ashamed of his mother because she was once a servant. The sheer horror of the fellow at times is positively dazzling.

The new town of Carshall is in every respect a suitable environment for him: bright, breezy, soulless and hellish. Class distinction in England, which never really worried anyone in his

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Authoritative Opinions

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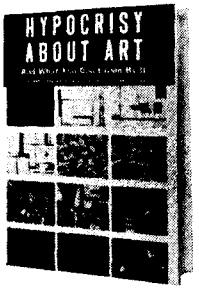
"Shaw has taken off the lid and exposed the aesthetic and critical overalls in the stew of beauty. Painter, art gallery director, and aesthetician for many years, Shaw has shown many opinions and their underlying presuppositions to lie in a Limpopo greasiness. At the heart of Shaw's theory of aesthetic judgment is his Theory of Boredom. Here he gives us a positive boost in 'Estimating Speeds of Tiring.' His chapter entitled 'The Metropolitan Museum Lays an Egg' is far too delicious to miss. A warning to aestheticians is that they may not like everything they read in Shaw, but certainly there is much to appeal to any catholic taste. This was a long overdue cleaning of the fat, self-congratulatory, aesthetic stables." Prof. Dale Riepe, C. W. Post College, in Philosophy & Phenom. Research.



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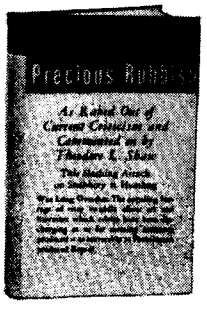
"I loved it — gave three critics one copy each — they loved it. Lost is he who hath no humor." — Dr. Wm. K. Keller, Prof. of Psychiatry. Univ. of Louisville.



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right mind, is largely disappearing today and instead there is a vile obsession with "status": the new society is touchy, competitive, insecure, eternally striving for effect and to be "one up" on the neighbor. Communities like Carshall do not rise naturally and slowly as the old English villages rose but spring ready-made from the febrile brains of Planning Committees. They have no sound reason for existing at all, which may account for the smug insistence of the founder-members on their pioneering role and the desire of the young to break away.

Mr. Wilson has done a beautiful job on this particular specimen, with its Town Center and Welfare Office, its supermarket, coffeebar, tenpin alley and Chinese restaurant – a happy touch, since, through some obscure psychological craving, they all seem to have one of these – and the tensions and pretensions of "multi-living." No one has a finer crueler ear for the speech of the lower middle-classes, with the eternal jocular cliché to cover social awkwardness or terror of feeling, the stilted phrase to express umbrage ("May I inquire your reasons for evading your commitment?") or the narrative style of a "card" like Arthur. When it comes to the merciless dissection of our contemporary Telly-culture he is beyond all doubt the top boy.

When, however, he attempts to portray the good and the kind, as with Harold's homosexual son, he flops so badly as to make the reader uncomfortable for him: he sets the teeth on edge as even Dickens at his most purple cannot do. He simply is not at home, artistically speaking, with goodness and the flaws in this often brilliant novel are due to his failure to recognize the fact.

FILMS

Slow and Quick Wits

Andy (Universal)
Banana Peel (Pathé Contemporary)

One of the small compensations of (approaching) middle age is to have been able to see some cyclical events through several cycles. From time to time, a huge entertainment corporation announces that, despite its monolithic money-making front, it is interested in new talent and "off-beat" works. I have seen this doubtlessly sincere pronouncement made – as the sociology of entertainment has changed in the past three decades – by big theatrical producers, by film studios sponsoring play and novel contests, and by an immense talent agency. In each instance the result, if any, has been the discovery of some arty preciousness that might better have been left under a little-theater or campus rock, or the discovery of some genuine ability that could then be fed into the machinery of entertainment production. This is not cynicism but history.

Several years ago Universal Studios "recognized" that the film audience in this country is changing – as indeed it is, in the sense that, increasingly, an appetite for good films is found in people who also have appetites for good books, music, painting. Universal said it was launching a project to provide "product" for the art houses, to show that America could compete with foreign countries in this area. Since there is no immutable law why American films should not attain the level of American literature, music, painting, I wished the project well, with crossed fingers. My wishes and my finger-crossing have, so far, failed.

Andy is the first result of the project and the first feature film by Richard Sarafian who has studied in the Film Department of New York University, has directed 80 television shows, and is now 32. He wrote the script of this picture, took it to Universal, and "was given the chance over some of his young contemporaries." Why? Because, one may guess, it is exactly what big-money producers, unsure outside commerce, would think of as art.

I would guess that what happened with the Universal executives was mirror-image thinking. *Andy* is the

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story of a mental defective of 40 – his last free evening in New York before his parents, finally exhausted, commit him to an institution. He wanders all night long and has various adventures purportedly touching or agonizing before he returns in the morning. Almost every element in the script is exactly the reverse of what a Hollywood producer would want in one of his own scripts. The hero is demented, he speaks barely six words in the whole picture, he gets kicked around and tormented, he has no sex appeal (a B-girl pities him briefly and a bedraggled prostitute takes him to her place), and virtually nothing happens, in plot or character-development terms. One can almost hear the hands coming together in joy around the Universal conference table. This, by negative definition, *must* be art.

Sarafian has given them exactly the film that, presumably, his script promised: the opposite of entertainment. It is slow (though short), laboriously poetized, unmoving and utterly pointless; with every scene obvious as soon as it begins and many scenes predictable before they occur; with every fancy shot repeated, usually much more than once. There are, of course, scenes of running through the streets. American low-budget films almost always include long tracking shots of people running, perhaps confusing athleticism with lyricism.

There is a good deal of admirable photography, by Ernesto Capparos, but this is irrelevant. By now – and quite rightly, I think – we take good photography for granted. Any especial praise of it reminds me of an anecdote that a novelist told me. An agent declined vigorously to represent his first novel (later published successfully). As my friend left the agent's office with the rejected manuscript under his arm, he turned at the door and asked mockwistfully, "Didn't you at least think it was well typed?" Good photography is obviously more important to films than good typing to novels; nevertheless, by now, it ought to be expected. Certainly it will not redeem intrinsic vapidity.

Further, for all its supposed seriousness, *Andy* has an ending as silly as any Sandra Dee opus. In the morning the parents change their minds, refuse to commit their son, and move to an-

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other apartment in the hope that he will become normal. At 40! This final nonsense is simply the latent nonsense of the whole film made apparent. Sarafian is an added example of the fact that our film schools are turning out many competent technicians with little comprehension of art.

Those who are impressed by *Andy* will probably dismiss *Banana Peel*. It is only a good entertainment – the story of two swindlers, played by Jeanne Moreau and Jean-Paul Belmondo, made (as is a French vogue) from an American novel – by Charles Williams. Marcel Ophuls, who collaborated on the screenplay, has directed with dry wit.

Complaints have been registered that the story is hard to understand. I don't understand the complaints; the script merely omits a lot of tedious connective tissue and explication, all quickly and clearly implied. The picture is no more than a good joke made in a film world where a first-rank serious artist like Miss Moreau has room to gambol. The prime requirement of a comedy of clever swindlers is an unflagging succession of clever swindles. *Banana Peel* supplies them, tersely, swiftly, along with Belmondo's smooth-rough appeal and the implications of character that Miss Moreau supplies easily even to trifles light as air.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

Correspondence

The New Republic welcomes communications in regard to subjects of current interest. Those of 300 words or less are most suitable for publication.

Selling a River

Sirs:

The two articles on the St. Croix River, "The Last Clean River" (December 12) and "That Nine-Foot Channel" (December 26), by James Ridgeway were greatly appreciated by the many Minnesota and Wisconsin residents who have been trying to prevent the construction of a coal-burning steam-electric plant on this river. Our problems have been varied. We are the last to deny the advantages of living with electrical power. We maintain there must be other ways to supply this power than by the exploitation of a relatively unspoiled river that runs by the doorstep of a large metropolitan area. We admit that Washington County proponents of the plan may have a tax problem, but deny that this problem gives them the right to sell a river whose waters are not rightfully theirs. Mr. Ridgeway's articles certainly helped arouse widespread public interest in this particular example of the conflict between resource-use and resource-management. And a widespread interest is about the only tool conservation groups have that is effective in combating a power company. Our thanks.

Mrs. R. H. Thomssen, Jr.
St. Paul, Minn.

Contempt of Congress

Sirs:

You reported editorially on the recent contempt citation and subsequent indictment of two Washington women, Dagmar Wilson and Donna Allen, members of the "Women Strike for Peace" (January 23). As you point out, they became targets for the Committee on Un-American Activities because of a visit made to the State Department urging the granting of an entry permit to Professor Yasui, a Japanese peace leader. You properly called into question the untested practice of the Committee of refusing a public hearing on request of the witness and you go on to call for the abolition of the Committee.

I am sure that the vast majority of your readers will agree with your judgment of the Committee and condemn its attack upon Mesdames Wilson and Allen. But your editorial fails to mention the fact that also cited and subsequently indicted is Russ Nixon, the General Manager of the *National Guardian*, a left-wing weekly.

As a matter of fact, all three of these individuals visited the State Department together. Indeed, it was at the invitation of the *National Guardian* that Professor Yasui came to this country. All three now find themselves faced with criminal sanctions for exercising the right of petition. If your

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omission of any reference to Mr. Nixon was inadvertent, then I think the record ought to be set straight, that he, too, is now being harassed for the exercise of a basic constitutional right.

Frank J. Donner
New York, N. Y.

Physician's Forum

Sirs:

The article by Dr. Lasagna ("Why are Doctors Out of Step?" January 2) is excellent. I congratulate you in bringing to your subscribers a point of view which is much needed and too little heard. Dr. Lasagna says, "There is unquestionably a need for some other kind of society or organization so that the substantial number of physicians who would like to express themselves other than through the AMA might have a voice." There is such an organization. The Physicians Forum has been in existence for over a quarter of a century. It is national in scope and has been trying for all this time to express liberal physicians' point of view. It could do this more effectively if it had a larger enrollment for although national in form it has a small membership. If all of the physicians of the country who felt as does Dr. Lasagna would enroll, the effectiveness of the organization could be more than doubled.

E. L. Young, MD
Chairman, Physicians Forum
1180 Beacon St.
Brookline 46, Mass.

Campus Government

Sirs:

We appreciated Mr. Harrison's general approval of the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley. ("Berkeley – Does That Banner Still Wave," December 19). On the crucial issue of university government, however, we found his banner waving at half mast. For while Mr. Harrison decries "bureaucratic rigidity," he shows surprising willingness to let the university remain in the hands of these same bureaucrats – the modern college administration. . . . It is not enough for Mr. Harrison to criticize administrators when they act unjustly; he should demand that they be subservient to the intellectual community on campus. One hardly expects *The New Republic* to be so tolerant of those who would convert the university into a "Knowledge Factory."

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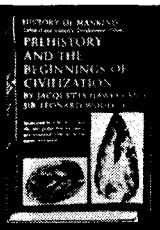

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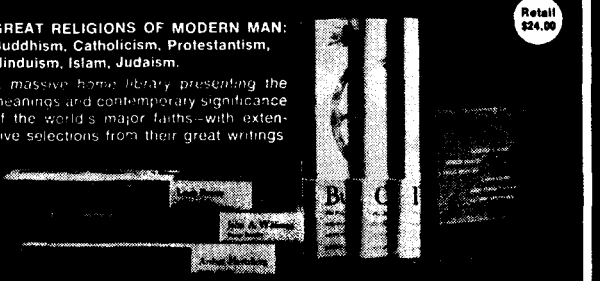

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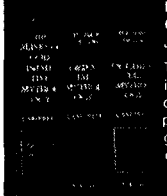

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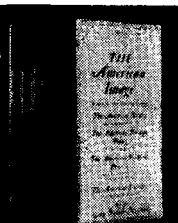

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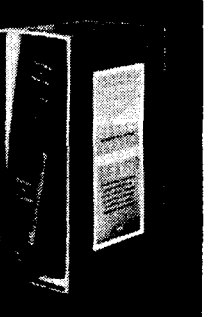

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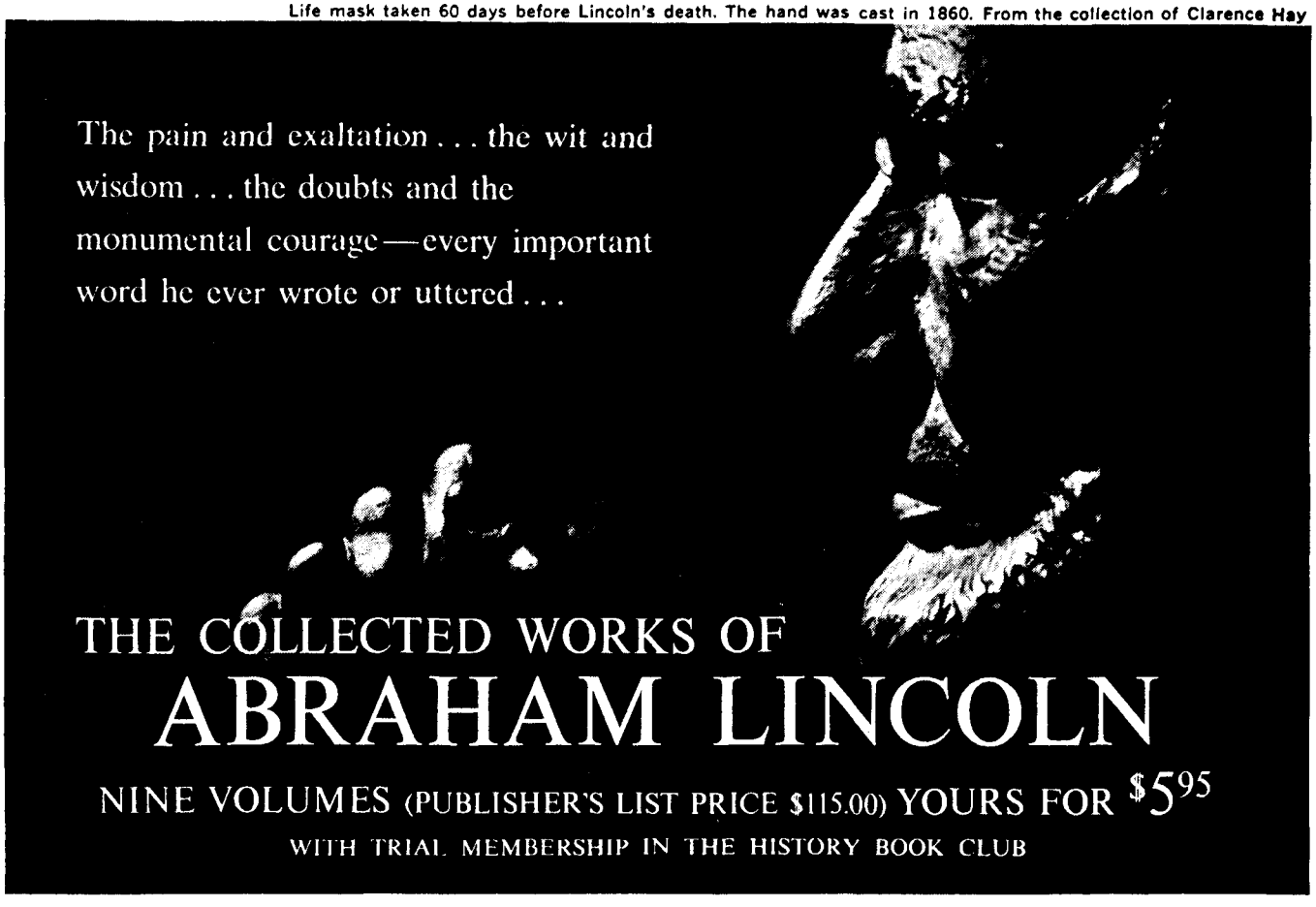

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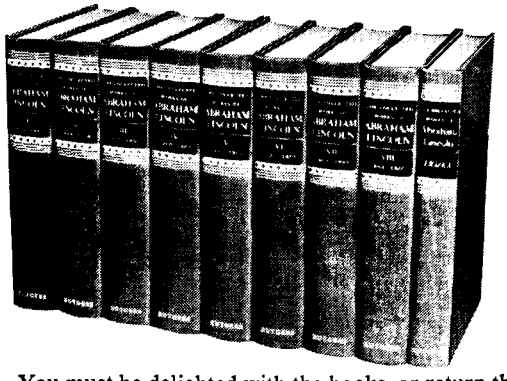

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